

The full returns of the 1911 census are not yet available, but they show a decline in our population of 321, doubtless caused by removals to our great West, and to the cities and towns of Ontario. According to their religion, our population is divided about as follows:—Roman Catholic, 536; Church of England, 630; Methodist, 535; Presbyterian, 223; and other denominations, 18. These figures give the Church of England a small lead, with the Methodists and Roman Catholics nearly equal, and the Presbyterians holding their own proportionately.

## Pioneer Days and Early Settlement

The settlement of Biddulph dates back to about the year 1830, when one Frederick Stover, a Quaker from Norwich, Connecticut, U. S., started what was known as the "Wilberforce" or "Colored Settlement," situated where the Village of Lucan now stands, and a little to the North-west of it. He bought from the Canada Company, which owned the whole Huron tract, 800 acres of land, at \$1.50 per acre, and settled thereon a colony of colored people composed largely of refugee slaves, who had broken away from their cruel taskmasters in the United States, and crossed the lines and for the first time in their lives breathed the pure air of Freedom, and thus Biddulph became to them "the Home of the Free." In 1834 the friends in Connecticut ceased to support the colony and school that they had established, and threw the colony on its own resources. Mrs. Bell, who settled on the London and Goderich road in 1832, died a centenarian in November, 1878. She was the last survivor of the Wilberforce colony. There are very few descendants of this colony now in either Biddulph or the Village of Lucan.

The pioneer settlers of the Township, outside of the Frederick Stover colored settlement, were principally emigrants from Ireland, with a small mixture of Scotch and English. The Irish settlers were chiefly from the County Tipperary, and in religion were for the most part Church of England and Roman Catholic.